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TELEGRAM

May 05, 2004

To: No Action Addressee
Action: Unknown
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 1439 - ROUTINE)
TAGS: PREL, ETRD, PGOV
Captions: None
Subject: UAE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINSTATE FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS LEADS HIGH-LEVEL DELEGATION TO ASIA AND EUROPE
Ref: None

CONFIDENTIAL ABU DHABI 01439

SIPDIS
CXABU:
 ACTION: POL
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CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: CDA: RALBRIGHT
DRAFTED: POL: JFMAYBURY; ECON
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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4230
INFO RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI 3983
RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0276
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 0115
RUEHB/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0128
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0074
RUCPDOC/USDOC WASHDC

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 01 OF 02 ABU DHABI 001439

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP, NEA/PPR
STATE PASS USTR - JBUNTIN
USDOC FOR USPTO
USDOC FOR 4250/DOC/MAC/ONE/CLOUSTAUNAU
GENEVA PASS USTR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/05/09
TAGS: PREL ETRD PGOV TC
SUBJECT: UAE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINSTATE FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS LEADS HIGH-LEVEL DELEGATION TO ASIA
AND EUROPE

Classified by Charge D'Affaires Richard A. Albright,
reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

¶11. (C) Summary: UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Shaykh Hamdan bin Zayed Al-Nahyan's (Hbz) official travel to South Korea, Japan, China and Germany from April 10-29 was designed to cement political and economic ties with the UAE's key trading partners. He met with Prime Minister Koizumi in Japan and Chancellor Schroeder in Germany. The Emiratis returned to the UAE with cooperation agreements in the fields of higher education, judicial assistance, and industry, but also with commitments to provide humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians, reinvigorating the Middle East Roadmap, and rebuilding Iraq. End summary.

¶12. (C) Hbz was accompanied to Asia and Europe by Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Shaykh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al-Nahyan, Minister of Economy and Commerce Shaykh Fahim bin Sultan Al-Qassimi, Minister of Communication Ahmed Humaid Al-Tayer, Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs Mohammed bin Nakhira Al-Dhahiri, Interior Ministry Under Secretary Shaykh Saif bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, and Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Economic Department Shaykh Hamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan. The delegation also consisted of UAE businessmen.

¶13. (U) In each of the countries he visited, Hbz urged his hosts to help revive the peace process in the Middle East and appealed to them to provide humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians. He also exchanged views with his hosts about the situation in Iraq, and discussed ways Asia and Europe could help diplomatically and financially in rebuilding Iraq.

South Korea

¶14. (U) In Seoul, Hbz met with Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon and with Defense Minister Cho Young-kil. South Korea committed to give \$5 million in humanitarian aid to the Palestinians. Discussions centered on Korea's commitment to dispatching troops to Iraq, and ways of bolstering power relations, space research, and information technology. UAE-Korean trade has reached \$7.9 billion, making Korea the UAE's second largest Asian trade partner after Japan. There are 44 Korean companies in the UAE. Korean airlines recently started offering three flights a week to Dubai.

Japan

¶15. (U) In Japan, Hbz met with Prime Minister Koizumi and Foreign Minister Yariko Kawaguchi. Hbz told his Japanese hosts that the UAE was committed to meet Japan's oil and gas needs, and he encouraged investment in other non-oil sectors, including human resource development, trade, investment, and exchange of expertise. The UAE and Japan signed a memorandum on cooperation in the field of higher education and scientific research that will encourage exchanges of researchers and students. UAE-Japan trade exceeds \$15 billion. The UAE exports 60 percent of its oil to Japan, making it the UAE's most important trading partner. The UAE also wants to increase Emirates Airlines flights to Japan and attract new Abu Dhabi-based carrier Al-Ettihad Airlines. Approximately 1,400 Japanese live in the UAE, representing the largest Japanese community in the Middle East.

China

¶16. (U) In China, Hbz met with Prime Minister Wen Jiabao and discussed bilateral trade, terrorism, and China's role in Iraq. The UAE and China signed an

agreement on judicial assistance in civil and business fields. The two countries also discussed ways to enhance cooperation in information technology. UAE-China trade reached \$5.8 billion in 2003. The UAE has become the largest importer of Chinese products in the Arab world. The number of Chinese companies working in the UAE has reached 500, and the Chinese labor force here is estimated at 50,000.

Germany

¶ 7. (C) Received at the head-of-government level (the German DCM here told us that Berlin responded to our having received HbZ at such a high level in Washington), HbZ met with German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, who also attended the inauguration of the new UAE Embassy in Berlin. HbZ also discussed with Chancellor Schroeder the possibility of German companies initiating development plans for Saadiyat Island. (Note: Presidential son and head of the intelligence service Shaykh Hazza bin Zayed Al-Nahyan launched an ambitious plan in the late 1990s to establish an offshore banking and commodities trading free zone on Saadiyat Island, but the project never came to fruition. End note.) HbZ also held discussions with the German Minister of Economy Wolfgang Clement and Minister-President of Lower Saxony Christian Wuff. The trip culminated with an agreement between the emirate of Abu Dhabi and auto giant Volkswagen to acquire a major stake in the German car manufacturer and move some production to the UAE.

¶ 8. (U) Although not a major customer of UAE oil, Germany's non-oil trade with the UAE is substantial. Figures collected from the Dubai and Abu Dhabi Chambers of Commerce indicate that non-oil trade with Germany topped \$2.5 billion in 2002. Germany is the second largest source (after the United States) of imports into the UAE, and German goods -- mostly luxury products, machinery and spare parts -- constitute nearly 8 percent of all imports.

Comment

¶ 9. (C) HbZ has told the Ambassador that he is likely to remain as Deputy Prime Minister and become Foreign Minister under a series of ministerial changes under consideration (reftel). He has grown in influence in recent years in his position as Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and has gained a reputation as an able and committed statesman. These successful visits have added to HbZ's luster.

Albright